

SENATE No. 347

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

James T. Welch

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to interagency collaboration for dropout prevention.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>James T. Welch</i>	<i>Hampden</i>
<i>Jose F. Tosado</i>	<i>9th Hampden</i>
<i>Benjamin Swan</i>	<i>11th Hampden</i>

SENATE No. 347

By Mr. Welch, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 347) of James T. Welch, Jose F. Tosado and Benjamin Swan for legislation relative to interagency collaboration for dropout prevention. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 283 OF 2013-2014.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth General Court
(2015-2016)**

An Act relative to interagency collaboration for dropout prevention.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 69 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after
2 section 36, the following section:

3 Section 37:

4 Section 1. Purpose

5 (1) To unite state agencies and offices with community-based organizations and parents
6 to develop and execute a comprehensive plan to systematically prevent dropouts in school
7 districts with 1,000 or more students and dropout rates higher than twice that of the state average.

8 Section 2. Definitions

9 (1) “At risk youth” when used with respect to a child, youth, or student, means a school
10 aged individual who meets one or more of the following requirements:

11 (a) is at-risk of academic failure;

12 (b) has come into contact with the juvenile justice system;

13 (c) has come into contact with the Department of Children and Families;

14 (d) has dropped out of school in the past;

15 (e) has a high rate of absenteeism, which shall be defined by the Council and the
16 definition shall include out-of-school suspensions;

17 (f) or any other indicators that the Council deems appropriate

18 (2) “Council” means the state interagency council established under c. 69 §37-4

19 (3) “District interagency council” means the councils established under c. 69 §37-5

20 (4) “Individualized plan” means a plan for support and/or services created by a
21 collaboration of state agencies, the community, and parents to assist in preventing an at risk
22 youth from dropping out of school that is unique to a particular at risk youth

23 Section 3. STATE INTERAGENCY COUNCIL—COMPOSITION AND DUTIES

24 (1)(a) 60 days from the passage of this chapter, a council shall be convened

25 (b) There is created within state government an interagency Council (hereafter, the
26 Council) composed of:

- 27 (i) the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education or a
28 designee
- 29 (ii) the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families or a designee
- 30 (iii) the Secretary of Health and Human Services or a designee
- 31 (iv) the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health or a designee
- 32 (v) the Commissioner of the Department of Youth Services or a designee
- 33 (vi) the Secretary of Labor & Workforce Development or a designee
- 34 (vii) a representative from the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee appointed by the
35 Secretary of Public Safety and Security
- 36 (viii) a representative from the Office of Special Education Planning & Policy
37 appointed by the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- 38 (ix) the president of the Massachusetts Teachers Association or a designee
- 39 (ix) the president of the American Federation of Teachers Massachusetts or a
40 designee
- 41 (ix) the executive director of the Massachusetts Association of School
42 Superintendents or a designee
- 43 (xiv) the executive director of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees
44 or a designee

45 (c) The Council members listed in subsection (1)(b)(i) through (xiv) of this section shall
46 appoint to a 3 year term the following members

47 (x) a representative of community-based service organizations

48 (xi) a parent representative from an urban community, as recommended to the
49 Council by the Massachusetts Parent Teacher Association

50 (xii) a parent representative from a suburban community, as recommended to the
51 Council by the Massachusetts Parent Teacher Association

52 (xiii) a parent representative from a rural community, as recommended to the Council
53 by the Massachusetts Parent Teacher Association

54 (2)(a) The Council shall annually elect a chair from its membership

55 (b) Two thirds members of the Council are necessary to constitute a quorum at any
56 meeting

57 (c) The Council shall meet quarterly or more frequently as determined by the chair

58 (3)(a) No member of the Council shall receive additional compensation for
59 participation on the Council, meaning:

60 (i) participation on the Council shall be considered an employment duty of those
61 representatives of state agencies

62 (ii) participation on the Council by individuals who are not government employees
63 shall be considered a pro bono service

64 (4) The Council shall:

65 (a) provide leadership to increase the efficacy of services delivered to at risk youth in
66 the districts identified in section 1

67 (b) create a comprehensive plan for early intervention for at risk youth enrolled in the
68 districts identified in section 1 by:

69 (i) developing a model process by which individual at risk youths are identified
70 beginning in the third grade

71 (ii) developing a model process for the creation and implementation of individualized
72 plans for at risk youth

73 (iii) monitoring and evaluating the creation and implementation of individualized
74 plans specified in subsection (4)(b)(ii) of this section

75 (iv) developing strategies to increase parental involvement in both the creation and
76 execution of individualized plans specified in subsections (4)(b)(ii) and (iii) of this section

77 (c) assist the districts identified in section 1 in establishing district interagency councils
78 to carry out the comprehensive plan

79 (d) develop administrative and governing structures for the operation of district
80 interagency councils

81 (e) ensure equity in the scope, duration, level, and type of services across the identified
82 districts

83 (f) recommend legislative, executive, and judicial policy and procedural changes

84 Section 4. DISTRICT INTERAGENCY COUNCILS—COMPOSITION AND DUTIES

85 (1) School districts shall establish interagency councils to carry out the comprehensive
86 plan developed by the Council for early intervention for at risk youth

87 (a) Each district interagency council shall consist of the Superintendent of the district
88 and a local representative from each the following agencies and groups serving the school
89 district, children and at risk youth, and their families

90 (i) the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, appointed by the
91 Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

92 (ii) the Department of Children and Families, appointed by the Commissioner of the
93 Department of Children and Families

94 (iii) the Department of Health and Human Services, appointed by the Secretary of
95 Health and Human Services

96 (iv) the Department of Mental Health, appointed by the Commissioner of the
97 Department of Mental Health

98 (v) the Department of Youth Services, appointed by the Commissioner of the
99 Department of Youth Services

100 (vi) Labor & Workforce Development, appointed by Secretary of Labor & Workforce
101 Development

102 (vii) a district teacher, appointed by the collective bargaining unit representing
103 teachers in the district

104 (viii) a district special education teacher, appointed by the collective bargaining unit
105 representing teachers in the district

106 (b) The members of the district interagency council specified in subsections (a)(i)
107 through (viii) of this section shall select 3 parents who have children presently enrolled in the
108 school district to serve on the district interagency council

109 (2) The district interagency council members shall

110 (a) serve 3 year terms

111 (b) identify at risk students pursuant to the process specified in section 3, subsection
112 (4)(b)(i) prior to the beginning of the school year

113 (c) develop an individualized plan for each at risk youth identified by the process
114 specified in section 3, subsection (4)(b)(i)

115 (d) provide services to meet the needs of individual at risk youths and their families
116 according to the development of the individualized plan specified in subsection (2)(c) of this
117 section

118 (e) establish and implement a case management system of the individualized plans

119 (f) establish and implement a method by which to involve parents of the at risk youth in
120 the individualized plan

121 (g) provide staff for the implementation of individual plans requiring services from two
122 or more agencies

123 Section 5. EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS—REPORT TO LEGISLATIVE
124 COMMITTEES

125 (1) At the end of each fiscal year, each district interagency council shall submit a report
126 to the Council detailing the results of the plans and programs implemented under this chapter.

127 (2) Within 90 days of receipt of the report specified in subsection 1 of this section, the
128 Council shall conduct an independent review of each district interagency council to evaluate the
129 results of the plans and programs implemented under this section

130 (3)(a) The Council shall submit a report on the independent review by the end of the
131 calendar year, detailing the results of the plans and programs implemented under this chapter to
132 the Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities and Joint Committee
133 on Education.

134 (b) The report shall include a recommendation to the Legislature as to whether the
135 programs ought to be modified or expanded.